



**Testimony by Ron McLellan, President
Connecticut Employees Union Independent, SEIU Local 511
Governor's S.B. Bill 1011
Comm. on Higher Education and Employment
Advancement
Public Hearing: March 10, 2011**

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My name is Ron McLellan. I am the President of Connecticut Employees Union Independent (CEUI), SEIU Local 511, representing approximately 4500 state workers in the NP-2 Maintenance and Service Bargaining Unit.

I am writing in opposition to Governor's S.B. Bill No.1011-An Act Concerning a Reorganization of Connecticut's System of Public Higher Education. CEUI represents over four hundred (400) maintenance and service workers in the CSU system and over one hundred eighty (180) in Connecticut's community and technical colleges. We are custodians, maintainers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, HVAC technicians, power plant operators, mail handlers and storekeepers just to name a few.

Connecticut has made a huge investment in the infrastructure at our campuses and CEUI members do the behind the scenes work to maintain and protect that investment. In fact, we are approximately 13% of the non-faculty staff on these campuses. As such, it is our hope that the Malloy administration will continue to involve our front line workers in the process of finding efficiencies and providing better service to our community which utilizes these colleges and universities.



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Governor's S.B. Bill 1011 represents a major structural change for the CSU system and the community colleges. A change of such magnitude should not be made in haste. There should be a process of discussions with all the stakeholders to determine our challenges and possible solutions. Our colleges and universities primarily serve the poor and working middle class population of Connecticut that has been hit the hardest by the financial meltdown and resulting rise in unemployment. The only way many of these families will rebound from this disaster is through educational and training programs that will lead to a good job. Each one of our universities and colleges has a unique community, personality, and specialty. Reform with such a broad brush would make it very difficult for each college and university to operate unimpeded and deliver on its mission.

We are not opposed to change for the better; however resisting the impulse of drastic changes, even in the midst of a financial crisis would be good public policy. CEUI remains committed and willing to work with the State Government to find solutions to the challenges facing Connecticut's Colleges and Universities.

Thank you.

Ron McLellan